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THE RAGTIMER

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PUBLISHED BY
THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSICAL RAGTIME

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The above 15 titles by 15 different composers
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THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

is a non - profit corporation having the following objects:

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

It's BASH registration time again

READ ALL ABOUT IT!
Turn to page 4

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc.
12th ANNUAL BASH
THE WEEKEND OF
OCTOBER 23, 1976
AT
TORONTO

RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

Make the BASH an event to remember! This is THE RAGTIMER with the particulars.

The BASH registration form and CARA INN reservation card is attached. PLEASE NOTE:

1. Your registration form and payment for attendance at the BASH must be sent directly to THE SOCIETY.
2. If you plan to stay at the CARA INN, your reservation for hotel accommodation must be made directly with the hotel on a separate basis.

We are again looking forward to another happy reunion of ragtimers. As usual, we have to make firm arrangements with the hotel in advance. Unexpected arrivals can cause an upset in planning. You help us so much in the work of getting ready by sending in your registration promptly. We don't want to turn anyone down because of lateness. A good old ragtime fraternity welcome awaits you.

RUDI BLESH is author of the book COMBO, U. S. A. In his foreword entitled "tuning up" Rudi said "A combo is any instruments that can make music - either tone, or rhythm or both. Maybe a washboard strummed with thimbles on your fingers won't make it in a symphony orchestra. But washboards have figured in plenty of fine jazz combos. How come? Because the washboard is a musical instrument..... The pianist-composer EUBIE BLAKE told it like it is.

(continued on page 4)

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'What is a legitimate instrument?' he asked, 'Why is it a drum and not a washboard? Give the finest drums in the world to a kid and they're only toys, but give a washboard to a drummer and you've got a rhythm instrument'. Eubie makes sense. What he means is: anything upon which we can produce and control tone and/or rhythm constitutes a musical instrument. Let's get to the reasons for this reference.

GLENN and BETTY "WASHBOARD" MEYER of St. Louis made a flying visit to Toronto in July on their way to a summer vacation at the Parry Sound island where Betty's parents JOHN and ELLIE KIRCHNER live for the season. It was an excited Betty who arrived with a newly composed manuscript and tape recording by Eubie Blake and dedicated to Betty. The title of Eubie's descriptive work is appropriately "BETTY WASHBOARD'S RAG". A somewhat overcome and ecstatic Betty said, "I feel as though I've been anointed".

Just as Rudi writes of Eubie's statement, "What is a legitimate instrument?", so it follows that the "BONES" may have been forgotten all too often as a provider of musical rhythm. We are indebted to Society member TOM SQUITIERI, staff writer of VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH, Tarentum, Pa. for a copy of his recent article about 91 year old CLYDE FULLERTON and his love affair with the rattling bones. Tom's article is reprinted in this issue for the enjoyment of other members.

We were sorry to learn that it became necessary to cancel this year's Ragtime Festival at Sedalia, Missouri. It had been scheduled for the last of July. Unforseen difficulties is understood to be the cause of cancellation.

PETER LUNDBERG of Sweden sent in the account of his trip to the Carthage, Missouri Bicentennial Ragtime Festival which will be referred to in our next issue.

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MAKE YOUR PLANS EARLY TO ATTEND

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY INC. 12th ANNUAL BASH - 1976 NOTICE

To be held on Saturday October 23rd, at TORONTO, 3:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m.

In the CARA INN located on the east side of the Toronto International Airport.

The entire lower floor complex of the hotel will be available for the Bash
Foyer - Connecting Corridor - Guildhall - Peel Room
3 Pianos - Continuous Cash Bar

PLEASE NOTE: Dinner will be served at 6:00 p. m. SHARP
(Latecomers cannot be served)

Price $16. 50 per person (Bar service costs not included)
Free parking for cars

(SEE BASH REGISTRATION FORM ENCLOSED)

We will be issuing a dinner ticket to be picked up with your registration. Be sure to keep it handy. It will be needed for surrender to hotel staff at the table when the meal is served.

Ragtimers should plan to make the CARA INN the place to stay. (The hotel has 211 guest rooms with color TV) - It then becomes the place where you are most likely to meet your fellow Ragtimers.

Room rates per day are as follows: $26. 00 - Single
$33. 00 - Double or Twin

(See Hotel Reservation Card enclosed)

NOTE: THE ABOVE RATES ARE A SPECIAL REDUCTION FOR REGISTRATIONS MADE DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL USING THE ENCLOSED CARD.

The Hotel promises to guarantee reservations received by October 8th. Thereafter reservations may have to be limited. Some of our local Ragtimers may also wish to become a CARA resident for the big Ragtime Weekend.

Arrangements have been made to obtain the use of the Peel Room (complete with piano) on the Friday evening, October 22nd, as a reception and warmup centre for members arriving in the city a day early and for the use of local members who wish to drop in and say Hello. The anticipated time will be 7:00 p. m. to closing.

On Sunday afternoon October 24th accommodation will be available from 1:00 p. m. until 6:00 p. m. for an afterglow fellowship period of our visiting members in particular. Local members are welcome to attend.

Please mail your advance BASH registration and remittance for arrival by October 16th at THE RAGTIME SOCIETY ADDRESS. Keep in mind that registration acceptance may have to be limited to advance registrations.

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THOSE HARLEM STRIDE PIANO MEN

(Ed. Comment: The following is a reprint of the interesting recollections of pianist JOE TURNER as written down by JOHNNY SIMMEN in 1952 and titled "The Pianists in My Life". Joe Turner was one of the Harlem group of pianists of the 20's and 30's. He accompanied singer Adelaide Hall (Shuffle Along, Blackbirds), touring Europe with her during the 30's. Adelaide Hall settled in England while Joe returned to the States. After World War II he returned to Europe and made Switzerland his home. His recollections were made the subject of liner notes for a live recording made in Zurich on December 6th, 1960. The information was supplied by member JESS SEWELL of Birmingham, Michigan from Stride By Stride: Joe Turner 77LP, 77LEU, 12/32. Joe is not related to the singer of the same name (Big Joe) of Kansas City, Mo.)

THE PIANISTS IN MY LIFE

I was born November 3, 1907, in Baltimore, Maryland. At the age of five my mother taught me piano (ear training) and then, after a while, I improved alone. When I was twelve years old I took music lessons for six months. My very first teacher, a woman was a "clock-watcher", which I didn't like. I paid her 75¢ an hour. The week after I took lessons from a new teacher, a Mrs. Alma J. Thomas, wife of A. Jack

Thomas, a well known musical director in Baltimore. What I liked about Mrs. Thomas is that she was not a "clock-watcher", but really interested in my playing, even cracking my fingers with a ruler when I made mistakes. So, not too long after that I used to stand by the piano and say to my Aunt Katie, "I sure wish I could play like that", and then I started playing "shout piano", copying her, but without the benefit of the left hand. Gradually I made such progress in that style that people started considering me a good pianist. I entered into a piano contest one night (my first one, in fact; my latest one having taken place last August when the marvellous Ralph Sutton and I were taking turns at the piano in one unforgettable session). While we were waiting at the theatre to be called on stage, a tall smooth-talking fellow by the name of Frank Johnson came up to me and said "Kid, I want you and the rest of the fellows to do your best tonight because I'll win the contest anyway. I know I can win, not even playing my best." I stomped with my "shout piano" through "Oh Baby, Don't Say No, Say Maybe" and came in second. Frank Johnson won, as he had said, and I became very interested in him and asked him to teach me a few piano tricks. He agreed on the condition that I'd buy the music to the latest tunes and teach them to him because he couldn't read. His style of playing was so similar to a good piano roll that you could not tell the difference. Frank was the first one, too, who mentioned the name of James P. Johnson to me, making clear that James P. was known, in fact, as the greatest jazz pianist in the world. That was in 1923.

I learned so rapidly from Frank's teaching that the entire city of Baltimore was comparing me to him. That's when he decided not to teach me any further because he did not wish to have that much competition. I take off my hat to him for being honest and plain spoken.

My interest in my left hand began when I heard Eddie Gibson of Baltimore, who had one of the greatest left hands I ever heard in my life. I would frequently visit his home and he'd play for hours with his left hand alone and he was always complaining that this left hand must be brushed up!! This became boring to me AT THAT TIME but I found out later that it was NECESSARY TO HAVE A POWERFUL LEFT HAND TO PLAY PIANO PROPERLY.

I copied numbers from James P. Johnson's piano rolls such as "Harlem Strut" and the "Carolina Shout" and copied them so well that I was considered a sort of child wonder. After being encouraged to go to New York I considered it, and went. I arrived in New York City with only one dollar and twenty-five cents in my pocket, and a suitcase made of a carton. (I had told my Mother I had a job in N. Y., which explained my reason for not taking more money but in reality I had no job; I was just trying to make my luck in the big city.) I asked the first person I met where I could find the coloured section, I was told to take the El train to 130th Street in Harlem. There I asked where the musicians were hanging out. They told me that it was a place called "The Comedy Club". Going there I had a drink, set my bag down and noticed that anyone who wished could play the piano. Realising that none of the pianists who had performed before me had done anything special I walked over and started in. After a warm-up number I went into the "Harlem Strut" and then I went to the climax with "Carolina Shout". When I had finished people swarmed around me and wanted to know where I came from. After I'd told them, someone in the crowd told me that the composer of the last two numbers I had just played was in the room: James P. Johnson! Of course, you can imagine how I felt! I must have impressed him, however,

since he left his table, came up to the piano and played the same two numbers as nobody in the world could! After it was over someone asked me if I wanted a job and of course I said "YES" then asked "When do I start?", at which point he replied "Right away, just come with me". I went with him to Baron Wilkins' Club (most famous piano club in Harlem, all the best pianists having played there one time or another) where I met, for the first time, and played with, Hilton Jefferson, the great alto man. When the boss told me he could only pay thirty dollars a week I almost fainted because I had never made more than twelve dollars. I worked there for a few months then joined the red hot band of trumpeter June Clark, who was a carbon copy of Louis Armstrong. June and Jimmy Harrison were known as the greatest brass team of that wonderful period. "Jazz" Carson a fine drummer, completed our quartet.

During these first months in N.Y. I visited Clarence Williams' office where I met one who I considered a truly great pianist, Eddie Blind Steele. This was also the time when we had the world's most exciting piano contests night after night with the following pianists regularly present: James P. Willie "The Lion" Smith; Fats Waller and Joe Turner. Very rarely did other pianists dare to play. Of course there were times when Stephen "The Beetle" Henderson was getting into the contest and he was demanding the greatest respect for his perfect left hand. Two others who would try their luck occasionally were Corky Williams and especially Willie Gant.

Shortly after, I had a tour of the west with Adelaide Hall (as accompanist together with the late Alex Hill, my good friend - in fact, it was a piano duo), but before we left we had trouble with Alex, and Francis Carter, also a good pianist, joined us. Benny Carter told me that when I reached Toledo, Ohio I should not play any piano because there was a blind boy there called Art Tatum and I would not be able to touch him. When the Adelaide Hall troupe finally reached Toledo, I asked where I could find Art and I was given the address of a buffet flat where he would appear every night at two o'clock after his work. After finishing at the theatre at midnight I went there and waited for Art to arrive. In the meantime, I played some good stuff on the piano there and two girls sitting near the piano started an argument over my playing compared with Art's. One girl said "He'll wash Art away". While the other was insisting "Just wait until Art gets here and you'll see how he'll cut this boy!", Art Tatum arrived, at two o'clock. I got up from the piano and greeted him. He asked me if I was the Joe Turner who had made a reputation with a fine arrangement of "Liza". I said that it was me and begged him to play piano for me. After he had refused to play before hearing me (and of course with Art I lost the argument) I played first "Dinah" for warming up and then my "Liza". When I was finished Art said "Pretty good", and I was offended, because everywhere else that I played "Liza" it was considered sensational and there was Art Tatum saying "pretty good"! After that, Art sat down and played "Three Little Words". Three Thousand Words would have been an understatement!!!! We became the greatest of friends after that. Art came to my home the next morning and even before I had left my bed I heard him in the parlour play my arrangement of "Liza" note for note. After hearing it only once the night before! By the way, he liked it so much that some time later he recorded it exactly as I played it. When I left Toledo I took his name and address with intentions of bringing him to New York to team with me, especially since we were having troubles with Francis Carter. But when we returned to New York the troubles switched over to me and I left the act, although they wanted to get rid of Francis. Since he was the only one left who knew the

act, they kept him. Being honest with everyone, I gave Adelaide Hall Art Tatum's address and that's how he came to New York. Many people have believed until now that I played together with Art - unfortunately I did not. Although I was supposed to have done, because of so much explaining, I decided not to deny anyone's belief that I had. (That's something putting all the discographies upside-down!) So I declare: Francis Carter made "I'm in the Mood for Love" with me, not Art Tatum and Francis Carter played in my place with Art Tatum.

Now to mention some more pianists who really gave me solid kicks in my life:

Lucky Roberts, Fats Waller, who was the best friend I ever had. Willie "The Lion" Smith - the most unpredictable pianist of all time because if Tatum played, we could pretty well guess what their feature number would be - but, when the Lion roared you never knew what was coming. By the way, the Lion and I are always in correspondence, reminiscing about the old times and discussing events in the present day jazzworld. We are still having fun together, in spite of the Lion roaring in New York while I'm beating it out all over Switzerland.

There is one other pianist whose genius I would like to have heard beside that of Art Tatum; Paul Seminole. He was the greatest trick pianist I have ever heard. I have jammed together with him many times and I know quite well that he was one of the wonders of our time. It would have been wonderful to have heard two geniuses in a contest, but Tatum came to New York after Seminole had already died.

Many times I heard Jelly Roll Morton brag about the things he'd done for jazz and much to my amazement he would always prove every statement. This leaves us the one fact about Jelly Roll. This is that the mere mention of the history of jazz without his name in capitals, is bunk. Teddy Wilson came to New York and played with Benny Carter's orchestra at Connie's Inn. He gave me no peace until I had taught him some of those smashing minor thirds that I had learned from James P. Johnson and Fats Waller. There is no doubt that Teddy Wilson is one of the cleanest technicians of our time.

Another name I cannot leave out is that of Donald Lambert who came often to New York from New Jersey, always looking for cutting contests. Believe me, when he finished throwing that left hand very few people had even a desire to walk past the piano, let alone play it!

Another old friend of mine who would stutter in his speech but never in his playing, and whose left hand is comparable to that of the Lion, James P., The Beetle and Kirby Walker, is Willie Gant.

Willie would always get Kirby Walker and hunt for me because it seems that my left hand worried him a bit so he decided between him and Kirby Walker they could give me all the troubles I needed because they both had (and have) dynamite lefts.

There was a place in Harlem called "Robinson's Restaurant" on 131st. There, during a long period, every morning between 5 and 6 o'clock I had the damnedest piano

contests that I ever cared to have with anyone, with none other than Duke Ellington. The number I used to wash him away with sometimes was his own composition "Jig Walk". Count Basie and I are the greatest of friends but one trouble I find with him is that every time we meet he wants to have a piano contest to prove he can always cut me. But by the time we have finished searching for a piano in every bar in town (where there are absolutely no pianos) we've come to the conclusion that this contest for which we've waited for the last 20-odd years will never come about unless someone closes down all the bars and lets us reach a piano!

Roger "Ram" Ramirez has the same fault in his playing as I have, that is, not being able to record well, but if you hear him in person you must consider him one of the very greatest piano players of our time. I'd like to mention that he is also the composer of "Lover Man", Billie Holiday's greatest hit.

Herman Chittison has practically as fast a right hand as Tatum but not with the benefit of Tatum's inspiration. A very good pianist and I recommend him highly.

Speaking about the years 1935-37, there was one of the most talented youngsters who ever sat down at a piano: Garnet Clark. He had - among many other things - a terrific arrangement of Tiger Rag and it is one of jazz music's great losses that he died so soon (1928, in Paris, at the age of 20 or 21). His recordings of "Rosetta", "Object of My Affection" and "I Got Rhythm" (French HMV) show him in fine form.

I'd like to mention the name of a pianist who, in my estimation, knew more chords on the piano than even our genius Tatum: Clarence Profit. Unfortunately this exceptional artist had that fault known to many musicians, not being able to record well. He, too, died young.

Next we have Cliff Jackson whose reputation as N. Y. 's greatest band pianist was unquestioned. It was not until I heard his record on the Black and White label in Johnny Simmen's home, however, that I discovered that he was also a terrific soloist in shout style, the music we know best. Whenever I hear of Earl Hines I remember that he impressed me so much with his playing in such masterpieces as "Deep Forest" and "West End Blues". I consider him an ideal of all ages. Inasmuch as his style was so different from our Harlem stride manner, the fact that he played (and even still does, to this day) in his own inimitable way makes him an honorary member of jazz in big bright lights!

Now we are coming to a jazz mystery. This mystery is Thelonius Monk. It has been said he created bop. I jammed with him for years and I have the records. Any resemblance between Monk's playing and bop is to me purely a coincidence. He plays a very interesting piano that impresses any musician including the Tate (Art Tatum), but his style is so mysterious that I must admit I have no name for it, but it's wonderful.

That day in 1930 I recorded with Louis Armstrong (Cocoanut Grove Orch), Buck Washington was on the session. He played "Dear Ol' Southland" with Louis, but aside from that fact Buck would come to Harlem from his engagements downtown with Bubbles his dancing partner and give all of us more trouble than we had the desire for.

In other words, Buck Washington is a terrific pianist.

The first time in my life I heard a piano played completely beautifully was when I heard Ellis Larkins. I tried many times to imitate Ellis on sweet tunes and then I realised it is a special art.

When I was in the army I met a pianist of whom I had heard before but had never met. His name is Kenneth Kersey, one of the most unassuming persons you could ever meet and who plays a really dynamic swing piano. What surprised me as much about him was his equally terrific playing of the trumpet. When you hear "Little Jazz" Eldridge you have heard Kenneth Kersey on the trumpet and vice-versa! As for Kenny's piano work, his "Sweet Lorraine" on Mercury gives you a good idea of his great talent.

Although I have had Marlowe Morris tell me to my face that I have never taught him anything, I can prove by musicians such as Art Tatum, Ram Ramirez, Chittison, etc. that I taught Marlowe Morris for 3 years how to use his left hand. He always had a terrific right, but his left hand is "Joe Turner".

Of Nat Jaffe, who died prematurely, I cannot truthfully say that I can remember anyone who could interpret Art Tatum better. Furthermore, he was a true friend of mine and we would hang out together nightly, as well as another friend of his - also a very fine pianist - Johnny Guarnieri. You only needed to mention the name of a good jazz pianist and Johnny would imitate him !

Now, I would like to make mention of something that happened to me in Utica, N. Y. : I walked into an all-night club and saw and heard at the piano an old and great friend of mine who is also one of the really important pianists: Gene Rodgers (who had played in England before the war), but this is not half the story. It ended with one of the darndest piano contests I ever had because Gene played his head off and I did my darndest but a third man, who happened to be none other than Erroll Garner, wrapped it up! There is no joke about it: Erroll Garner is just about as great as they come!

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CONCERT REVIEW

By Tex Wyndham

ST. LOUIS 1976

The 12th Annual Ragtime Festival was held June 14-19 on St. Louis' Goldenrod Showboat, and a more ideal week for ragophiles would be hard, if not impossible, to find. For openers, you get six nights of the marvelous St. Louis Ragtimers, and that in itself would be enough for many; it is impossible not to be entertained when this unique group, featuring Trebor Tichenor's impeccable rural midwestern pianistics and Al Stricker's insouciant vocals, is bouncing its tasty, musical way through yet another esoteric song from ragtime's heyday.

But in the bargain, you also get large doses of ragtime piano of every stripe, at intermission in the front deck, dining room and side barge, in opening sets in the theater, and all night in the lounge, with the keyboard changing hands every 15-30 minutes. Dave Jasen's novelty ragtime was as fast and hot as ever, with a new dimension and depth added via funkier-than-usual rides on the likes of "Bantam Step" and "Powder Rag". Bob Milne's mastery of the keyboard was also impressive, moving from graceful Joplins to a barrelhouse-boogie rendition of "Dr. Jazz's Raz-ma-taz". Jean Kittrell again proved a crowd-pleaser, mixing rag solos with her inimitable, humorous, and sometimes slyly salty vocals. Jelly Roll style tickler Butch Thompson; Mike Montgomery, who provided superb accompaniments to various strolling musicians from ragtime violinists (complete with written charts) to visiting jazzmen; and myself on solo piano and rag-songs-with-vocal, were also in from the hinterlands for the week to join forces with the Goldenrod's regulars, Darryll Ott, Tom McDermott and Dan Peelor.

Don't go away, though. On your same admission ticket, you can pick and choose (there's music all night at five locations, plus impromptu jamming at a sixth) among a phalanx of traditional jazz bands. The Original Salty Dogs, playing a hard-hitting, hairy-chested brand of two-beat, and the Happy Jazz Band, a carefully controlled combo from San Antonio, were headliners all week. The free-wheeling Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Band from New Jersey was on hand through Wednesday, with Denver's swinging Queen City Jazz Band and Phoenix's good-natured Desert City Six present from Thursday on. (Desert City's pianist apparently got left behind a sand dune, so, in addition to my regular seat with the Bix band, I donned Desert City colors for Thursday and part of Friday, with Jean and Society member Tom Shea, an unscheduled but welcome addition to the action, and maybe others, taking up the rest of the slack.) Four St. Louis area bands filled out the bill with occasional appearances.

With variety like that, everyone is certain to find something to enjoy, and for my own part, when not on stage I was often faced with truly agonizing choices necessitated by my inability to be in more than one place at a time. Even after six nights of solid music for seven hours each, I still hadn't heard as much as I'd hoped to of certain artists, and if that doesn't add up to a successful ragtime festival, I can't imagine what would.

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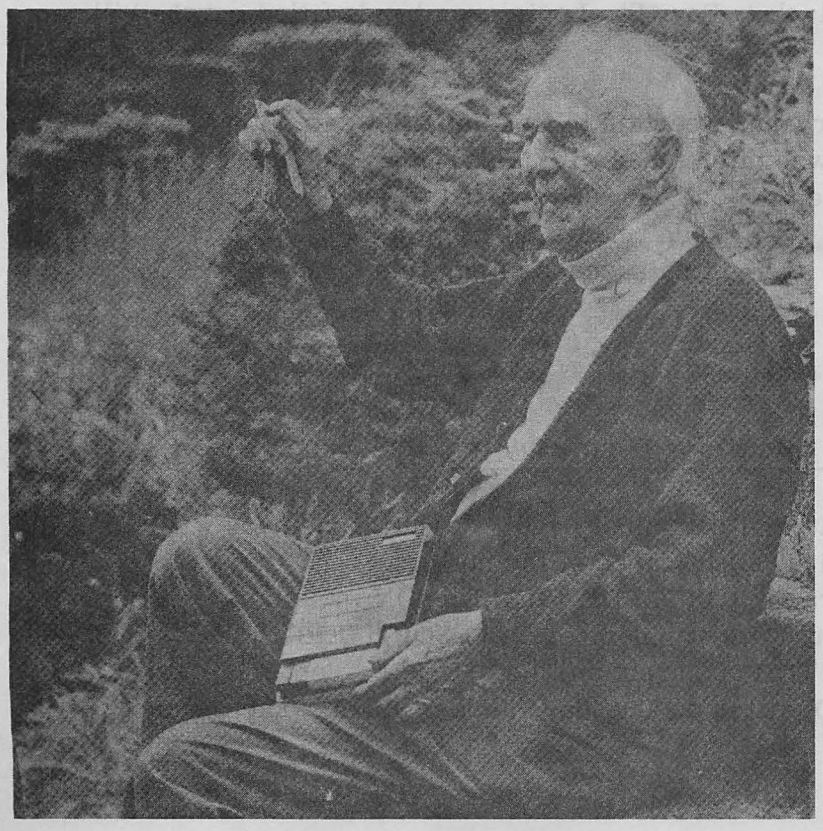
THE RATTLE OF THE BONES

(Ed. Comment: If you read our editorial column at page 3 of this issue, you will already be "tuned up" for the musical significance of the bones as a rhythm maker associated with the early days of ragtime. CLYDE FULLERTON was playing the bones before the ragtime era began. Society member TOM SQUITIERI, a staff writer with VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH of Tarentum, Pa., U. S. A. sent in a copy of his article which appeared in the Dispatch on Tuesday, June 1, 1976. The following is a reprint:)



CLYDE FULLERTON

"RATTLING RHYTHMS - FREEPORT MAN'S FINGERS CREATE MAGIC FROM BONES

With a teasing smile, Clyde Fullerton of Freeport reaches into his sweater pocket and pulls out the remains of an 1895 rib roast. A few flicks of the wrist fill the room with a clicking sound that matches a gardenful of crickets.

Fullerton, 91, is a bones player.

The rib bones he uses are the same pair his mother gave him when he was 10 years old. Slightly worn, but never needing varnish, the bones represent a part of the American music scene that started without direction, grew through personal energy and eventually became the cornerstone for ragtime, jazz, rock and disco.

"My mother gave me the bones for something to do," Fullerton said with a twinkle in his eye. "I never had heard them played, but after a little work I got them talking."

"Ever since then, when I play them, I think of that meal - and how much more expensive it would be to eat that meal today."

It wasn't until after he started playing that Fullerton heard other bone players. He discovered that unlike the minstrel players who shook one bone in each hand, he could rattle two bones in one hand.

"They had these Mr. Bones men who were always with the travelling shows," he said. "But they could just keep beat with other music, never go alone."

Fullerton's technique is almost impossible to catch with the eye alone. He places one of the four-inch, slightly curved bones between his index and middle fingers. The other bone is placed between the middle and ring fingers. Holding the first bone stiff with the middle finger, Fullerton shakes his hand and twists his arm ... and the rattle begins to flow. He has a different motion for a snap beat, rattle, shake or the many other variations he has perfected.

"When you're smiling, when you're smiling, the whole world smiles with you, rata-tata-tata-tat ..."

Fullerton never entered competitions and now thinks most people have forgotten about the instrument. It has been around since first discovered in Mesopotamia. "Clappers," as they were once called, dated from 2,800 B. C. in the Ur River Valley and in Egypt.

The bones were multi-purposed: in addition to supplying rhythm, they were carried by lepers as a warning device.

Though uncommon to the 1976 ears, rattling bones nevertheless holds a mystique that draws listeners. Last year Fullerton visited his daughter in Rupert, W. Va., while the town was celebrating its founding day with outdoor festivals. He had his first chance to perform.

"They had this big band on a stage in the street, playing some square dance with these 25 expert dancers they brought in for the crowd," he said. "The music was good so I slipped the bones out and started rattling. The crowd around me gathered closer to listen, then more people moved over.

"The manager of the festival came up to me and, why, he had never heard the bones talk. He said the people had never heard it either and he asked me to play over the loudspeaker. I wouldn't do it because I didn't want to show off. So he tried to work them, but he couldn't."

Born March 3, 1885, in Freeport, Fullerton was a 1903 graduate of Freeport High School. After attending prep school at Kiski Springs, he went to Princeton University for two years before hard times at home forced him to leave school for a Vandergrift mill job.

His father was also born in Freeport, while his grandfather, William Penn Fullerton, and his brother Samuel, settled in the town and opened a mill in 1840. The mill was later destroyed by fire, but rebuilt. It stood until redevelopment brought it down a few years ago.

Sitting back in his chair, Fullerton spins yarn after yarn on how life was in the early part of this century, a time when heated discussion over potbellied stoves on baseball and checkers was the diet of most American men.

Fullerton had his own stint with professional baseball, playing through area teams to a few exhibition games with the New York (now San Francisco) Giants. Moved later

to the minors, he played four years before a broken leg ended his bid for a major league job.

While with the Giants, Fullerton became a close friend of ace pitcher Christy Mathewson. Besides being an excellent baseball player, Fullerton noted that Mathewson was also "a darned good checker player."

"He played 50 guys in one night in Madison Square Garden, tied eight of them, beat the others," Fullerton said. "Word got out he was pretty good."

"So one night there's this knock on the door and two old whiskery men with canes and hats are standing there and said they were looking for the checker player. Said they wanted to show him how to play.

"Well, I let them in and Christy let the first man start to win the game, then he cleared the board. The man brushed his whiskers and looked up at his friend and said 'You want to show him?' I guess they didn't take well to losing to youngers."

Stopping his stories, Fullerton goes to the front door to wave at the engineer and conductor of the Butler Local - a ritual he has been doing for so long he can't remember when it started. It is the second ritual of his day: the other is giving golf pointers to needy beginners.

Settling again in his chair, Fullerton shakes his wrist in anticipation of another performance. "You don't learn how to play them anywhere and I wouldn't know how to teach them," Fullerton said. "Everyone tells me to make a recording before I die or else the sound will be gone. Well, I'll be gone too."

"Five foot two, eyes of blue, a-rat-tat tat tat, tata tat, has anybody seen my bones ..."

Despite not entering any contests, Fullerton thinks his style is one of the best. He keeps in practice by playing with music on a tape recorder or with television commercials.

"Pieces of wood, a fork and spoon, I can play anything I can pick up and hold," he said. He scoffs at oldtimers who only shake the bones and his talent is getting better known in Freeport through his promise to entertain at the senior citizens club.

"About eight years ago in Idaho I saw a man do the bones. He was the biggest man I ever saw, maybe 400 pounds," he said.

"He wasn't doing the bones right, didn't have the right technique, but the crowd still thought he was good. I wanted to set them right, but I wasn't going up there and tell him he was wrong. No sir, I'm not crazy."

Fullerton has also found a practical use for his bones: he uses them to wake his son up in the morning.

The ticking of the old grandfather clock fills the sudden silence in the room.

Sheet music on the piano is held down with a flute, an electric guitar is leaning against the wall amid numerous instrument casts. And Clyde Fullerton, relaxing in his chair, quietly suggests that playing the bones probably prevented him from getting arthritis.

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by
TEX
WYNDHAM

RCA CRL5-1106 (5-Lp boxed set) 'Scott Joplin: The Complete Works For Piano', piano solos by Dick Hyman.

Side One: Maple Leaf Rag, Original Rags, Swipesy, Peacherine Rag, The Easy Winners, Sunflower Slow Drag.

Side Two: The Entertainer, Elite Syncopations, The Strenuous Life, A Breeze From Alabama, Palm Leaf Rag, Something Doing.

Side Three: Weeping Willow, The Chrysanthemum, The Cascades, The Sycamore, The Favorite, Leola.

Side Four: The Ragtime Dance, Eugenia, Lily Queen, Gladiolus Rag, Nonpareil, Heliotrope Bouquet.

Side Five: Search-Light Rag, Rose Leaf Rag, Fig Leaf Rag, Pine Apple Rag, Solace, Sugar Cane.

Side Six: Stoptime Rag, Euphonic Sounds, Country Club, Wall Street Rag, Felicity Rag, Paragon Rag.

Side Seven: Scott Joplin's New Rag, Silver Swan Rag, Kismet Rag, Magnetic Rag, Reflection Rag.

Side Eight: Antoinette, Cleopha, March Majestic, Combination March, Rosebud, Great Crush Collision (march), Great Crush Collision (ragtime improvisation), School Of Ragtime (instructions read by Eubie Blake).

Side Nine: Bethena, Binks' Waltz, Pleasant Moments, Augustan Club Waltz, Harmony Club Waltz.

Side Ten: Improvisations on excerpts from: The Entertainer, Heliotrope Bouquet, Fig Leaf Rag, Stoptime Rag, Pleasant Moments, Gladiolus Rag, Peacherine Rag, Elite Syncopations, A Breeze From Alabama, Scott Joplin's New Rag, Something Doing, The Chrysanthemum.

Set includes illustrated booklet including essay by Rudi Blesh on ragtime, Joplin, and the individual selections; reproductions of the covers of most of the tunes played; and

photographs of ragtime personalities and memorabilia.

Beautifully recorded and brilliantly played, this set manages the difficult trick of presenting Joplin as a composer of legitimate stature, "classical" if you will, without watering down the optimistic, rhythmic, unpretentious appeal of ragtime as the folk art that Joplin used for his inspiration. Hyman takes Joplin at face value, reading the scores with 100% adherence to the published versions except for very few passages on very few tracks, turning in crystalline articulation at a usually brisk, light, straight-ahead rhythm; not surprisingly, Joplin needs nothing else to come out sounding great.

Hyman's approach is self-effacing, aimed at hitting a tempo and mood that brings out the best in Joplin's arrangements, letting the listener focus on the compositions without the potentially distracting effect of unusual interpretations by the artist. His judgment in this respect displays real sensitivity to the material; you'll wind up not only bowled over once more by Joplin's genius as embodied in your favorite Joplins, but you're very likely to gain, as I did, a new admiration for numbers that possibly ranked lower on your list - I've never gotten so much out of "Palm Leaf Rag" before, for example. Hyman's ethereal, moody reading of "Silver Swan Rag" makes a great deal of sense out of its oddly-structured trio. The sunnier-than-usual rendition of "Bethena" does a lot for a piece that can easily sound ponderous.

Still, you can't help appreciating how good a pianist Hyman is. He always sounds quite comfortable, no matter what the pace, and he gives you every note hit dead center - no trouble hearing inner voicings, counter-melodies and the many other facets of these works.

Low points are inevitable in a program of this length; some are a matter of the audience's personal taste, and not really worth cataloguing here. I think few will dispute, however, that "School Of Ragtime" is a complete waste of nearly eight minutes: 1) Joplin's naive text, which scarcely fits the music, hardly needs to be read, especially as it is pictured in the accompanying booklet; and 2) the exercises are very short, and recitation of the accompanying text inevitably submerges them in verbiage. You may regret, also, that one of Hyman's infrequent decisions to omit repeats was used on "Solace", admittedly shortening a potentially long track, but at the cost of emasculating the natural build-up of perhaps the most moving reservoir of sheer poignancy in all of Joplin.

I would not have isolated the marches (Side Eight) and waltzes (Side Nine); some of them are rather slight efforts which might have been better served by being slotted chronologically among the rags for variety's sake. Moreover, while a few of the improvisations (Side Ten) are imaginative transformations of Joplin's themes, most of them, dashed off by Hyman as a way of relieving tension during the sessions, suffer from superficial treatment and are too short to develop properly.

This set comes along at a time when the market has already absorbed several Lps devoted entirely, or in large part, to Joplin (including one other 5-Lp Joplin set). Thus, despite the general high level maintained by Hyman, those of you who've already acquired the earlier stuff may legitimately question whether this relatively sizeable investment will justify itself in terms of significantly broadening your Joplin library.

Conversely, if you're a pianist or otherwise interested in hearing Joplin played well and literally to the manuscript, this collection is just for you. Anyway, it's a fine job overall, and gets my recommendation.

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LETTERS

Letters are welcome from members. Excerpts believed to be of general interest are passed along in this section of THE RAGTIMER.

(Ed. Comment: For ragtimers, there is the unending joy of hearing ragtime regularly presented nowadays in live concert form. The BASH at Toronto October 23rd will be followed a week later on October 30th with another big ragtime event in the New York City area at C.W. Post Center, Long Island University. Along with a recent letter from Dave Jasen, he enclosed particulars. If you need more information write to David A. Jasen, 40-21 155 Street, Flushing, N.Y., 11354, U.S.A.)

RAGS TO RICHES
A RAGTIME SPECTACULAR

Announcing the greatest ragtime bicentennial concert of the year. Seven of the greatest ragtime performers in the world together on one stage for the first time, in a Benefit for the School of the Arts at the C.W. Post Center of Long Island University, Greenvale, Long Island, New York on October 30, 1976.

A Bicentennial tribute to America's original music, the School of the Arts presents the world renowned JOE "FINGERS" CARR, DICK HYMAN, England's NEVILLE DICKIE, New Jersey's DICK WELLSTOOD, THE ST. LOUIS RAGTIMERS, from the cradle of ragtime, Detroit's BOB SEELEY, and Post's own DAVE JASEN.

Virtually a Who's Who of Ragtime from the Fifties thru the Seventies, RAGS TO RICHES will offer the greatest ragtime interpreters in the widest variety of ragtime sounds ever heard in a single concert.

This gala event will take place on C.W. Post's beautiful campus on Northern Boulevard in the Dome Auditorium, Saturday evening on October 30, 1976 at 8:15 p.m. All seats are reserved and are priced at $25.00, $20.00, $15.00, and $10.00.

An opportunity to see and hear the entire spectrum of America's contribution to the world of music in a RAGTIME SPECTACULAR, combines the opportunity for you to make a contribution to The School of the Arts at C.W. Post Center of Long Island University.

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You might be interested in knowing that "Treemonisha" has had other performances in the United States in 1976. One was at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, March 4-7, with Luther Stripling conducting a college-community cast. Accompaniment was by piano and banjo with myself on banjo. This was the first complete Upper Midwest performance of the opera.

The first West Coast performance opened at Central Oregon Community College in Bend, Oregon, Jan. 22. Musical director was David Evans, who used to play banjo in our ragtime quartet when he lived here in Mankato. He first became familiar with "Treemonisha" through my copy which I obtained from The Ragtime Society in 1967.

A sidelight on the Macalester performance is that the largely black cast did have a scattering of whites in the dancers and chorus who had been tastefully darkened by makeup. Conductor Luther Stripling, a black, mentioned to me that he sees no reason why it shouldn't be performed by a white cast and would like to see that happen someday.

Lowell Schreyer, Mankato, Minnesota, U.S.A.

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Harry Smith
6130 Alma St., Philadelphia, Pa., 19149, U.S.A.

Would like to hear from fellow ragtimers. Is interested in sheet and folio music collections.

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EUBIE BLAKE -
IS OLDEST LIVING MEMBER OF A.S.C.A.P.

Eubie Blake, born February 7, 1883, reached 93 years of age on his birthday in February 1976. He composed his popular "Charleston Rag" in 1899. Under the leadership of composer Victor Herbert, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers was formed in 1914 for the purpose of protecting the rights of its members.

Nowadays Eubie is the dean and oldest member of that Society, with the younger Irving Berlin and company forming the lineup headed by Eubie. Eubie is honoured by A.S.C.A.P. from time to time in recognition of the rank he holds. The amazing Dr. Blake continues actively as a performer and composer, while operating his sales organization Eubie Blake Music at 284-A Stuyvesant Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11221. We are proud too, of the fact that Eubie is an Honourary Life Member of The Ragtime Society Inc.

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REMEMBER! IT'S BASH
REGISTRATION TIME !!

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CAPSULE

INFORMATION

RELEASES ---------- FOR HAPPY HUNTING

NOTE: We often receive information from members and other sources which can be passed along in brief form as items of possible general interest. CAPSULE INFORMATION RELEASES do not refer to items or material which can be obtained from the SOCIETY. Further, we do not guarantee the accuracy of the information given. Under the conditions stated, we are able to publicize a broader coverage of promising information coming to our attention.

LP Record - CLASSIC RAGS & STOMPS - Morten Gunnar Larsen, pianist. (Arne Bendiksen ABM 439 Stereo). The first release of a serious ragtime record in Norway. Joplin/Scott/Lamb/Blake/ Morton/Johnson and Claude Bolling are included in this presentation. Larsen is a member of our Society; a young classically trained pianist from The Music Academy of Oslo, with strong feeling for ragtime and New Orleans jazz. The record is available directly from M. G. Larsen, Blasbortveien 1B, Oslo 8, Norway - price 34.00 nkr ($5.90).

Music Box Collectors - Announcement received of the formation of EASTERN MUSICAL ANTIQUES, P. O. Box 297, West Orange, N. J. 07052, U. S. A. - Offering to serve collecting needs in buying, selling, trading and repairing musical antiques. Write to EMA for their advertising particulars.

LP Record - THE RED ONION JAZZ BAND with NATALIE LAMB: MANASSAS 1973. FAT CAT'S JAZZ, FCJ 157. Recorded live at 1973 Manassas Jazz Festival. Tex Wyndham wrote the liner notes and is at the piano on 8 of the 12 tracks. Available from Fat Cat's Jazz Records, P. O. Box 458, Manassas, Virginia, 22110, U. S. A. (U. S. price $6.98 postpaid).

LP Record - HAPPY BIRTHDAY BIX, The Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Band In Washington - Fat Cat's Jazz, FCJ 160. Recorded live at Bix concerts 1974 and 1975 for PRJC - Tex Wyndham is the band pianist. Contains 9 tracks of fine old jazz standards. Available from Fat Cat's Jazz Records, P. O. Box 458, Manassas, Virginia 22110, U. S. A. (U. S. price $6.98 postpaid).

LP Record - BELGIAN RAGTIME, Marc Heronet, Alain Lesire and Andre Van Lint - EMI-4C054. Contains 14 tracks of period to contemporary ragtime by three Belgian pianists - an unusual source for ragtime. Information can be obtained from Marc Heronet, 9 Av. Vandromme, 1160 Brussels, Belgium for ordering purposes.

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SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN - at the Chelsea Inn, 33 Gerrard St. W., Toronto - in "The Piano Bar" Mon. to Fri. 5:00 p. m. to 8:00 p. m. and with his trio in "The Chelsea Bun" Lounge Mon. to Sat. 9:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m.

EUBIE BLAKE - The DEAN of RAGTIME - This popular recording artist and composer performs frequently at Concerts and Festivals. Does guest appearances on T. V. talk shows and is often to be heard on radio programs (watch your local press music programs for dates).

STEEN CHRISTENSEN - at the Mechanical Music Museum (MMM), Vesterbrogade 150, Copenhagen (Denmark), every 2nd & 4th Wednesday each month.

BOB DURST - (RAJAH OF RAGTIME) plays ragtime piano on the Holiday Inn circuit thru the middle U. S.

PETER FAHRENHOLTZ - plays solo ragtime piano and with bands - regularly on tour in Denmark. (Recently in Holland.)

DAVE FLOWITT - at DJ's Tavern & Rest., Cor. University Ave. & College, Toronto. Solo piano Sat. 4:30 to 7:30 p. m. Watch for gigs with Dr. McJazz Band.

"GASLIGHT" GALE FOEHNER - at Rochester, N. Y. - Regularly performing ragtime and sing-a-longs with slides at concerts and private party engagements.

RALPH GRUGEL - and The Eagle Jazz Band at East Shore Club, Lakeshore Drive, Cleveland, Ohio, Fri. and Sat.

JOHN HASSE - at The Ordinary, Nashville, Indiana, Fri. and Sat. nights.

JIM HESSION - at the Polynesian Hotel (Tambu Lounge), Disney World, Orlando, Florida - six nights a week.

JIM KAPLAN - at the Pizza-Stein, 1428 W. Galena Ave., Freeport, Illinois on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

JOHN MADDOX	- at El Porto Rest., 121 King St., Alexandria, Virginia, from June 7 to Sept. 11.
	- at Cherry Creek Inn, 600 So. Colorado Blvd., Denver, Col. Sept. 20 to Oct. 16.
KEN MAYHERCY	- (RAGTIME $ BILL) - at Signal Hill Supper Club, Craig., Col. for summer.
GLENN MEYER	- and his band at St. Louis, Mo., making regular appearances.
BOB MILNE	- at Clamdiggers Rest., 30555 Grand River, Farmington (Detroit), Mich. Mon. thru Sat. 7:30 to 12:00 p. m.
MIKE MONTGOMERY	- at The Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, John R. Road north of McNichols, Detroit, Michigan, Friday nights.
MAX MORATH	- on the road with his new show "The Ragtime Years".
DR. ELI NEWBERGER	- and The New Black Eagle Jazz Band at the Stickey Wicket Pub, West Main Street, Hopkinton, Mass., Thursday 8:00 p. m. to 12:00 p. m. (Pianist is Bob Pilsbury).
TOM NOEL	- on the road with his living portrayal shows "Mark Twain at Home", and "Mr. Jelly Lord" based on the life of Jelly Roll Morton.
CHARLIE RASCH	- with SISTER KATE, at the Cow Palace, Bancroft Road about 8 miles west of Toledo, Ohio, Fridays and Saturdays 9:00 p. m. on.
HANK ROSS	- with Red Onion Jazz Band, at O'Connor's Beef'n Ale House, 708 Mountain Blvd., Watchung, N. J. Friday nights at 7:30 p. m. on.
TOM SCHMUTZLER	- and the Hardware City Temperance and Ragtime Society, at Shakey's Pizza Parlor, Vernon. Conn. - Fridays and Saturdays. - at The One Way Fare, Simsburg, Conn. Sunday nights.
BOB SEELEY	- at Clamdiggers Rest., 30555 Grand River, Farmington (Detroit), Mich. Mon. thru Fri. 4:00 to 7:00 p. m.
DAN SUMMERS	- and New Charleston Chasers regularly appearing in the Buffalo area.
TREBOR TICHENOR	- on The Goldenrod Showboat, at St. Louis, Missouri. Does weekly radio show on KWMU - FM 90. 7 called "RAGOPHILE with Trebor Tichenor", Fridays at 6:00 p. m.
TERRY WALDO	- has weekly half hour radio show "THIS IS RAGTIME" on National Public Radio - Check your local listing.
TEX WYNDHAM	- and The Red Lion Jazz Band, appearing regularly at Mencotti's Restaurant, 1101 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, Delaware.
BILL ZINN	- and Zinn's Ragtime String Quartet doing Concerts and College dates in the New York area.

PERFORMERS: Please keep us posted on your whereabouts and your schedule will appear in this column.

A
RAG TIME
TWO-STEP.

SUNFLOWER SLOW DRAG.

By

SCOTT JOPLIN & SCOTT HAYDEN.

Scott Joplin. Composer of
"Maple Leaf Rag."
"Swipesy Cake Walk."
"Aqustain Club Waltz."

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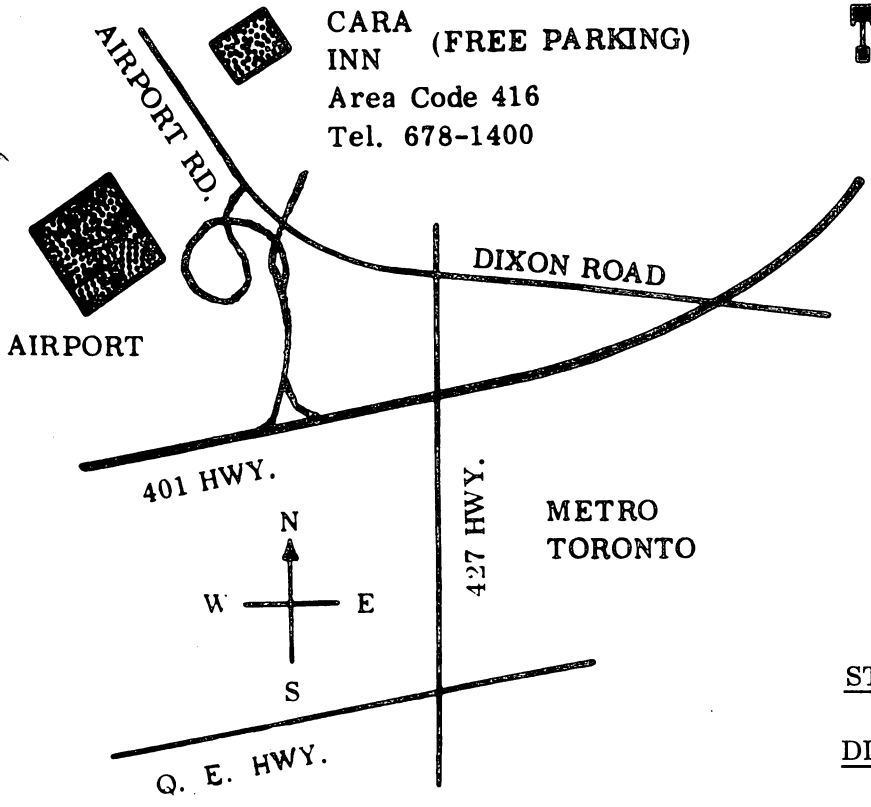

12th ANNUAL BASH

1976

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LOWER FLOOR
GUILDHALL & PEEL ROOMS

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